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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: COMMENTARY ON CHENEY AND AHMADINEJAD
VISITS TO UAE

¶1. SUMMARY: A UAE intellectual in "Al-Khaleej" is highly critical of the recent visits of both Vice President Cheney and Iranian President Ahmadinejad. He feels both visitors exploited the UAE's "generosity and hospitality" in order to voice "arrogant" messages. Another UAE intellectual in "Al-Khaleej" criticizes Cheney's "double standard" as he speaks of the liberation of fifty million people from dictatorship, but does not mention the suffering of the Iraqi people. End Summary.

¶2. Under the headline "UAE's generous hospitality and its less generous guests", UAE intellectual, Dr. Abdul-Khaliq Abdullah, wrote in a 05/22 op-ed in "Al-Khaleej":

"Although the UAE capital of Abu Dhabi was, as usual, very kind and generous in its reception of its guests, these visitors undercut its hospitality and did not meet it with equal courtesy. Cheney lacked courtesy and etiquette. He acted arrogantly and used his recent visit to the UAE to direct threats against Tehran, reiterating that America would not allow Iran to extend its hegemony in the Arab Gulf or possess nuclear weapons. This lack of courtesy equally applies to Ahmadinejad, who behaved as if he were addressing his popular base in Tehran, and was not a guest in a Gulf Arab country that believes in non-alignment. He used his visit to the UAE to vow that Iran would respond strongly to any violence and American military aggression. The outcome of the confrontation of Iranian-American rhetoric in the UAE is an increased atmosphere of political tension and war in the Gulf region, a region already suffering from security and political turmoil. Dick Cheney, known as the extremist hawk in the American administration, is a hated American political figure who has contributed to the increasing waves of enmity towards America all over the world. He represents the ugly and rigid face of America and represents the arrogance of power in its worst case. This arrogance has led to repetitive foolish acts including the invasion of Iraq and likely a fourth war in the Arabian Gulf."

"Cheney, considered the most powerful Vice President in American history, is still living under his illusion of a victory in Iraq. He is unwelcome wherever he goes. He is a bad omen, always carries bad news, and does not master any language except that of threats and intimidation. On the other hand, the extremist Iranian President was never keen to win the countries of the region, nor did he show any diligence in his first visit to the Emirates. He came without carrying any positive initiative to resolve the crisis of the three UAE islands occupied since 1971. Ahmadinejad has

destroyed many bridges of understanding and cooperation built by his predecessor, the moderate reformist President Mohammad Khatami. Iranian-Gulf relations were at their best under President Khatami. The current Iranian President set relations between Tehran and the Gulf back ten years. Although he was offered a rare historical opportunity, perhaps the final, to repair the damage and build confidence, he failed drastically. It seems that both guests, the extremist Ahmadinejad and the more extremist Cheney, have not made good use of their recent visit to the region. However, it seems clear that UAE diplomacy came away with a huge success. It reiterated the UAE's absolute political non-alliance, which must be continuously reiterated in the face of the existing military confrontation between Washington and Tehran. The UAE is capable of gaining the love and respect of all and is also capable of establishing good relations with all. There is no need to side with one party against the other."

13. Under the headline "Who holds them accountable for what they say?" a UAE academic and columnist, Dr. Abdullah Al-Suweiji, wrote in his weekly column on 05/21 in Sharjah-based Arabic daily "Al-Khaleej":

"Dick Cheney... and all members of the American Administration contradict themselves and say things far from their political ends as they deliver their messages to the world. In fact, this reflects the extent of their confusion and the seriousness of the situation in Iraq... While Cheney speaks of the liberation of fifty million people from dictatorship, he does not mention the four million Iraqi refugees, tens of thousands dead, hundreds of thousands wounded and disabled and the Iraqi widows and orphans... He sees with one eye only and therein lies the American catastrophe, stupidity or

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conspiracy."

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